



Waltham Forest Town Hall  
Forest Road  
E17 4JF

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## Cabinet

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Minutes of  
14 April 2026 at 2.01 pm

### Present:

#### Chair:

Councillor Grace Williams                      Leader of the Council

#### Cabinet Members:

Councillor Ahsan Khan	Deputy Leader (Housing and Regeneration)
Councillor Naheed Asghar	Portfolio Lead Member – Inclusive Economy
Councillor Rosalind Doré	Portfolio Lead Member - Libraries, Culture and Sports & Leisure
Councillor Andrew Dixon	Portfolio Lead Member - Stronger Communities
Councillor Paul Douglas	Portfolio Lead Member - Finance and Resources
Councillor Kizzy Gardiner	Portfolio Lead Member - Children and Young People
Councillor Khevyn Limbajee	Portfolio Lead Member - Community Safety
Councillor Louise Mitchell	Portfolio Lead Member - Adults and Health

#### Officers in Attendance:

Linzi Roberts-Egan	Chief Executive
Marc Gadsby	Strategic Director, Adult Services
Joe Garrod	Strategic Director, Place
Kathi Gittens	Assistant Director, Quality Assurance & Principle Reviewing Officer
Anthony Jackson	Democratic Services Officer
Rob Manning	Strategic Director, Resources
Debbie Porter	Strategic Director, Neighbourhoods and Environment
Rianna Terry	Assistant Director, Leadership and Democracy
Jeremy Walling	Assistant Director, Commercial Law
Emily Wood	Head of Democratic Services

### 75. Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Clyde Loakes.

### 76. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

## **77. Minutes of the previous meeting**

No declarations were made.

## **78. Annual Procurement Plan 2026/27**

Councillor Douglas introduced the report and, in doing so, outlined the plan's significance in ensuring that all Council expenditure on goods, services, and works was conducted efficiently, transparently, and in a manner that delivered optimal value for money for residents. He thanked Mr. Adam Sargent – Director of Procurement - and his team for their hard work in compiling such a comprehensive and robust plan.

The Leader emphasised that effective procurement was fundamental to the Council's financial health and its ability to deliver high-quality services as it ensured that public funds were spent wisely, that contracts were awarded fairly, and that the Council maintained rigorous oversight of its suppliers and service providers. She commended Councillor Douglas and the procurement team for their commitment to those principles, recognising that their work directly contributed to the Council's ability to achieve its strategic objectives and provide excellent services to the community.

### **Decision**

Cabinet:

- (1) approved the Annual Procurement Plan as shown in – Appendix 1 of the report; and
- (2) noted that the detailed business case for each of the proposed procurements will be subject to approval by the Strategic Commissioning Board to ensure that it meets the Council's objectives regarding value for money, sustainability and legal compliance.

## **79. Housing and Inclusive Growth Delivery Plan**

Councillor Khan introduced the report and, in doing so, provided a detailed background to the plan, tracing its origins back to the administration's early commitment to addressing the housing crisis. He then referred to the establishment of the Affordable Housing Commission, which was tasked with exploring strategies to increase the supply of affordable homes within a challenging market environment. Councillor Khan explained that the Commission's recommendations subsequently informed the Council's overarching housing strategy. He went on to say that a primary driver for the Council's focus on delivering new homes was the extensive housing waiting list and the Council intended to significantly increase the provision of affordable housing across the borough. Councillor Khan highlighted the successful adoption of the Local Plan, which set a housing target exceeding that mandated by the London Plan which was a unique achievement within London. He further detailed

the Council's proactive approach to unlocking stalled development sites and the successful collaboration with the Greater London Authority (GLA), which secured a £200 million package to revitalise five previously stalled sites within the borough. Councillor Khan pointed out that nearly all of the sites were now in the delivery phase and were anticipated to provide much-needed homes, including affordable units, within the next one to two years. Councillor Khan highlighted the positive impact of recent government changes regarding the use of Right to Buy receipts, which now permitted the use of grants to bring forward homes, presenting new opportunities for the Council. He then expressed gratitude to the dedicated teams across housing, regeneration, and finance, including Mr Joe Garrod and Mr. Rob Manning and their respective teams.

The Leader commended Councillor Khan for his leadership and the extensive work undertaken over the past four years, acknowledging that the provision of sufficient social and affordable homes remained one of the most significant challenges facing the borough and other London boroughs. She then emphasised the broader impact of inclusive growth, linking it directly to residents' productivity, employment, health, and wellbeing. The Leader acknowledged the Council's achievement in providing affordable homes, despite extreme challenges faced in housebuilding since 2021, including factors such as Brexit, economic instability, and rising construction costs.

The Leader then referred to the positive shift in recognition from both central government and the London Mayor regarding the scale of the housing challenge, leading to policy changes that enabled Councils like Waltham Forest to build more social and affordable housing. She also highlighted the fact that Waltham Forest was highlighted as one of the top Council home builders in the country for several years, which was a testament to its proactive approach, innovation, and ability to evolve its response. The Leader then gave thanks to Mr Joe Garrod, and his team, Mr. Ian Rae – Director of Regeneration, Planning & Strategic Property, Ms Meera Kumar – Director of Regeneration, and Ms Priya Ravindran - Assistant Director of Capital Delivery, for their significant contributions.

## **Decision**

Cabinet:

- (1) approved the council's approach to the application for the GLA Social and Affordable Homes Programme (LSHAP). Noting the intention to apply to enter into a strategic partnership with the GLA to bring forward a long-term pipeline of affordable housing schemes on both council and wider land;
- (2) noted both the council and wider schemes to be put forward as part of the LSHAP programme;
- (3) agreed that the council enters into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in respect of the £18.2m grant funding and approve the acquisition of a minimum of 77 properties, (or such greater number as can be acquired to utilise the grant), 62 to use for temporary accommodation and 15 for refugee resettlement;

- (4) approved prudential borrowing of £13.2m in the General Fund towards the purchase and refurbishment cost of the 62 properties to be used as Temporary Accommodation;
- (5) approved prudential borrowing of £3.8m in the Housing Revenue Account towards the purchase and refurbishment cost of 15 properties to be used as resettlement accommodation for refugees;
- (6) delegated authority for the final terms of the acquisitions to the Corporate Director Capital Delivery and Estates;
- (7) delegated authority to the Strategic Director of Resources, in consultation with the Strategic Director of Place, to periodically review the updated financials for the scheme and ensure that the proposals remain affordable and financially sustainable for the Housing Revenue Account and General Fund and to fully utilise any remaining grant funding to maximise value to the council; and
- (8) delegated authority to the Corporate Director of Housing, in consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources and Corporate Director of Governance and Law, the decision to determine the most appropriate method through which the council will provide the accommodation. This will be through the creation of a local lettings policy (if so advised) and amendments to housing policies which govern the letting of properties by the council. This may include consideration of using fixed-term tenancies.

## **80. Exclusion of press and public**

Cabinet agreed not to discuss the content of the exempt appendices and, therefore, not to exclude the press and public.

## **81. Acquisition of New Build Homes at Fellowship Square - Blocks H & J**

Councillor Khan introduced the report and, in doing so, explained that initially, the homes detailed in the report were earmarked as affordable housing, with the expectation that a registered provider (RP) would acquire them. He confirmed that, despite efforts, no interest was received from any RPs. Consequently, the homes were marketed more broadly, attracting significant interest from another London Council. Councillor Khan expressed satisfaction that the Council's team was able to develop a compelling offer, utilising a combination of Right to Buy receipts, grants, and borrowing, to secure the acquisition of homes in Blocks H and J. He said that the plan included a greater focus on family-sized units, directly addressing a substantial demand identified within the borough. He added that the acquisition would streamline the management of the Fellowship Square site by reducing the number of landlords from three to two, with One Housing and the Council becoming the sole landlords. Councillor Khan stated that the acquisition would provide

residents with high-quality, energy-efficient, and affordable homes in a desirable location. He extended thanks to all officers involved in developing the proposal.

The Leader praised the initiative as an excellent example of the Council's commitment to creating the best possible homes for its residents. She also highlighted the importance of providing family homes and pointed to the excellent location of the properties at Fellowship Square.

## **Decision**

Cabinet:

- (1) approved in principle, the proposed acquisition and the utilisation of Right to Buy (RtB) receipts and borrowing on the terms set out in the exempt Financial Appendix 1 of the report;
- (2) delegated authority to the Strategic Director of Place in consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources to review the updated financials for the scheme and ensure that the proposals remain affordable and financially sustainable for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) before contracts are concluded; and
- (3) delegated authority to the Strategic Director of Place in consultation with the Deputy Leader (Housing and Regeneration), the Strategic Director of Resources and the Corporate Director of Governance and Law to enter into the all necessary legal agreements for the acquisition of the homes by the Council.

**The meeting closed at 2.16 pm**

**Chair's Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_